

Week Ending Friday, January 21, 2005

Proclamation 7862—Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2005

January 14, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was a visionary American and a dedicated leader who believed deeply in liberty and dignity for every person. His faith and courage continue to inspire America and the world. We honor his life and his work.

Growing up in Atlanta, Georgia, Dr. King witnessed firsthand the injustice of a segregated society. He realized that change was necessary to ensure the full promise of our Constitution for all Americans, and his charismatic leadership awakened the conscience of America.

Dr. King's dream inspired our Nation with what he called "a certain kind of fire that no water could put out." Since Dr. King's involvement in the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, Americans have witnessed the power of the law to prevent injustice and encourage the finest qualities of our Nation. Last year, we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Once this landmark legislation was signed into law, Americans could no longer be denied a room in a hotel or a table at a restaurant because of their race.

Our Nation has accomplished much over the past 40 years. Our journey toward justice and equality has not always been an easy one, and it is not over. However long the journey, our destination is set: liberty and justice for all. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., believed in the good that exists in all men and women. We will remember the work of Dr. King as we continue striving to meet the founding ideals of our great Nation.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America,

by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Monday, January 17, 2005, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate activities and programs that honor the memory and legacy of Dr. King.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:29 a.m., January 19, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 15, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on January 21.

Proclamation 7863—National Sanctity of Human Life Day, 2005

January 14, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The Declaration of Independence proclaimed that all Americans are endowed by the Creator with the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. On National Sanctity of Human Life Day, we celebrate the sacred gift of life.

We have a responsibility in America to defend the life of the innocent and the powerless. Our Nation has made significant progress in recent years toward building a culture of life. Last year, I signed into law the Unborn Victims of Violence Act of 2004, which provides that any person who causes death or injury to a pregnant woman commits

two separate offenses. I worked with members of both parties to ban the brutal practice of partial-birth abortion, and I signed the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act. Working with the Congress, my Administration has halted spending of taxpayers' money on international programs that promote abortions overseas. We continue to promote abstinence education, adoption programs, crisis pregnancy programs, and other efforts to help protect life.

My Administration remains committed to the steadfast belief in the dignity of every human being and the promise of every life. Across our country, we must continue to encourage our citizens to make ours a more just and welcoming society in which every child is born into a loving family and protected by law. We will work with decency and respect to change hearts and minds, one person at a time. In doing so, we will build a lasting culture of life and a more compassionate society.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Sunday, January 16, 2005, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. I call upon all Americans to recognize this day with appropriate ceremonies in our homes and places of worship and to reaffirm our commitment to respecting the life and dignity of every human being.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

George W. Bush

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Proclamation 7864—Religious Freedom Day, 2005

January 14, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

George Washington wrote, "The liberty enjoyed by the people of these States, of worshipping Almighty God agreeably to their consciences, is not only among the choicest of their blessings, but also of their rights." On Religious Freedom Day, Americans commemorate the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom in 1786, which helped set the course for freedom of religion to be included in the First Amendment to our Constitution.

Our Founding Fathers knew the importance of freedom of religion to a stable and lasting Union. Our Constitution protects individuals' rights to worship as they choose. Today, we continue to welcome the important contributions of people of faith in our society. We reject religious bigotry in every form, striving for a society that honors the life and faith of every person. As we maintain the vitality of a pluralistic society, we work to ensure equal treatment of faith-based organizations and people of faith.

As the United States advances the cause of liberty, we remember that freedom is not America's gift to the world, but God's gift to each man and woman in this world. This truth drives our efforts to help people everywhere achieve freedom of religion and establish a better, brighter, and more peaceful future for all.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 16, 2005, as Religious Freedom Day. I encourage all Americans to reflect on the great blessing of religious freedom, to endeavor to preserve this freedom for future generations, and to commemorate this day through appropriate events and activities in homes, schools, and places of worship.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of January, in